

President Biden, this is a moment of leadership. Stand with the Cuban people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair reminds Members to address their remarks to the Chair.

REQUEST TO CONSIDER H.R. 18, NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION ACT

(Mr. BRADY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRADY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to strongly oppose Democrats' cruel efforts to repeal the Hyde amendment.

My wife, Cathy, and I are proud parents because of two women in difficult situations who chose life and, through adoption, gave us two loving sons.

Since 1976, the Hyde amendment has saved the lives of nearly two and a half million innocent babies, and whether you are pro-abortion or pro-life, as I am, Americans have always agreed, Washington should not use their taxpayer dollars to pay for and encourage abortion.

Unfortunately, that is what President Biden is trying to do, repeal this important humanitarian protection of the innocent unborn.

This is an affront to the majority of Americans who do not want their tax dollars to fund abortion.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Ways and Means, and the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 18, and ask for its immediate consideration on the House floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under guidelines consistently issued by successive Speakers, as recorded in section 956 of the House Rules and Manual, the Chair is constrained not to entertain the request unless it has been cleared by the bipartisan floor and committee leaderships.

CONGRESS MUST ACT NOW

(Ms. SALAZAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SALAZAR. Madam Speaker, libertad. Freedom. Abajo la dictadura. Down with the dictatorship.

These are the calls we are hearing from the people of Cuba.

They have taken to the streets demanding the end of the Castro tyranny.

We see the American flag waving on the streets of Havana because they yearn for the same thing we have: Freedom. We see the American flag waving on the streets of Havana because that is what they want, freedom.

Castro has taken repression to scientific levels. There are at this hour over 500 political prisoners and thousands more are in jail.

Madam Speaker, we are begging President Biden to stand with the Cu-

bans now. The Castro regime has cut off the internet so no one will see how they are torturing the Cuban people. America has the technology to provide internet now in Cuba.

We don't need any study groups about remittances. What we need is action. We need the President to grant the green light now so that Cubans can organize among themselves and can stay in the streets; so they don't feel abandoned; so they know the whole world is watching; so they can decide their own political future. Time is of the essence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members to observe proper decorum.

WILDFIRE AND DROUGHT UPDATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I want to speak with the body here about the situation in the West with wildfire and drought.

As so many of you know from the news, there is wildfire breaking out all over in the western States. My home State of California has several going on right now. I represent the very north part of the State, the First Congressional District, and we have fires routinely reaching now the five-digit mark, including the newest one known as the Dixie fire; it is over 30,000 acres. My understanding is, there are 11,000 new acres just last night burning up in the area of Feather River Canyon.

But this is not, unfortunately, news this time of year in the West. Anything west of the Rocky Mountains pretty much seems to be on the line.

What is going on is that for many years we in this country value the Smokey the Bear principle of putting out fires when they occur in the forest. And I think we still do value that. But what we haven't done on the back side of that is to manage our forest lands.

And so what we have seen in the decades since, a good-minded policy, a good-intended policy, is that the forests have built up so much fuel. So much damage gets done from all this fuel being built up from fire season. It kind of creates its own drought situation inside the forest there when you have more inventory per acre than what the forest can sustain, especially during a drought period. And so in the West, in California, it is known you are going to have drought years, you're going to have wet years. And it kind of goes with the program there.

So I am disturbed that we can't advance the ball more on really the type of forest management we need to be doing. We can sustain X amount of trees per acre, and this is depending on tree type, tree age, particular landscape, the particular weather pattern in a micro area, but if we are not doing

that then we are going to see this year after year.

So the U.S. Forest Service has kind of transitioned from—not that many years ago—about one-third of their budget would go for fire suppression and two-thirds for the good green work we call it, green harvest, permits, maintenance of forest roads and all the other things you do in the off season in order to make the asset protected from fire and also usable to the people. Because this is indeed the people's asset. And they are getting less and less access to it because of fire, but also just flat being closed down because of other environmental concerns that have been brought up.

That is a key part of the argument here is that we have had hundreds of thousands of acres burned. I will just stick with California for a moment here. And simple projects after the fact when we are talking salvage, salvage timber that needs to be removed after a fire, if you do that within a reasonably soon amount of time after a fire then you can still get value out of that timber. If you do it soon. No more than a year would be ideal.

But what happens is that when Forest Service goes to try and contract or do some of the work post fire to remove trees that will be dead or are already dead but still have a salvage value, you can make a timber product out of that, they get sued. The environmental groups come in and sue them saying, oh, we think you are going to take away habitat for the black-backed woodpecker or something like that. And indeed, what has already happened is the environment has already been ruined for quite a few years where the spotted owl might have been, where other owls might have been, or other wildlife had been.

You should see some of the horrific pictures of how the wildlife is affected in a fire like this. And these are not just a slow-moving fire, but these conflagrations that we have these days that move from treetop to treetop across the whole landscape.

And one of the saddest stories you will see is a rancher just right in my home county of Butte on the east side who wrote the story about how their family had been there for at least five generations and long-time ranchers there, and a fire whipped through there and took out so many of their livestock, but also the legacy, the land that they love has been ruined by fire in eastern Butte County, California, last year.

□ 1930

So what are we going to do? Are we going to continue to watch this go on year after year after year?

I have run legislation to try and make it just a little bit simpler to do basic, I think, commonsense idea of trimming around power lines, moving hazardous trees and foliage away from power lines. But that means you are going to have to cut some trees. That